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ACTION SCT-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	A-00	CA-02	CCO-00	CG-00
	CIAE-00	COME-00	CTME-00	INL-00	DODE-00	DOEE-00	DOTE-00
	WHA-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	EB-00	EUR-00	OIGO-00	FAAE-00
	FBIE-00	UTED-00	VC-00	TEDE-00	INR-00	INSE-00	JUSE-00
	LAB-01	L-00	MMP-00	M-00	AC-01	DCP-01	NRCE-00
	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OCS-03	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00
	P-00	SSO-00	SS-00	TRSE-00	USIE-00	USSS-00	ASDS-01
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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0442
INFO AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO PRIORITY
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 BUENOS AIRES 004842

S/CT FOR REAP

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: PTER, AR
SUBJECT: ARGENTINA: 2000 ANNUAL TERRORISM REPORT

REF: STATE 217248

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THE FOLLOWING RESPONSES ARE KEYED TO PARAGRAPH 3 IN
REFTEL.

1. QUESTION A. THERE WERE NO ACTS OF TERRORISM IN ARGENTINA DURING THE YEAR 2000. HOWEVER, THE GOA CONTINUES TO INVESTIGATE THE 1994 TERRORIST CAR BOMB ATTACK ON THE ARGENTINE-ISRAELI COMMUNITY CENTER (AMIA) AS WELL AS THE 1992 BOMBING OF THE ISRAELI EMBASSY. IN LATE FEBRUARY 2000, THE AMIA CASE WAS PRESENTED FORMALLY BY THE INVESTIGATING JUDGE FOR TRIAL, WHICH IS EXPECTED TO BEGIN LATE MARCH OR EARLY APRIL 2001, ALTHOUGH NO OFFICIAL DATES HAVE BEEN DETERMINED. IN AUGUST 2000, THE SUPREME COURT

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AUTHORIZED THE HIRING OF ADDITIONAL PERSONAL TO ASSIST IN THE PREPARATION FOR THE UPCOMING ORAL TRIALS. THE RESOLUTION AUTHORIZED THE ORAL COURT PROCESSING THE CASE TO HIRE 3 ADDITIONAL LAWYERS, 3 ADDITIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL, AND 7 ADDITIONAL ASSISTANTS, SUBSTANTIALLY CONTRIBUTING TO THE GOA'S MANPOWER IN THIS CASE. HOWEVER, AT THE SAME TIME, THE SUPREME COURT REDUCED THE NUMBER OF CONTRACTORS WORKING ON THE INVESTIGATIVE LEVEL.

2. QUESTION B. THE GOA HAS REQUESTED THE EXTRADITION OF WILSON DOS SANTOS, A MATERIAL WITNESS IN THE AMIA BOMBING, FROM SWITZERLAND. THE EXTRADITION IS CURRENTLY IN PROCESS, WITH DOS SANTOS EXPECTED TO ARRIVE IN ARGENTINA FOR QUESTIONING SOMETIME BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR. REPORTEDLY, DOS SANTOS CLAIMED TO HAVE INFORMATION ON THE PLANNING OF THE 1994

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TERRORIST ATTACK ON AMIA. IN EARLY 2000, HE WAS INTERVIEWED IN BRAZIL, WHERE HE RETRACTED MUCH OF HIS PREVIOUS TESTIMONY.

3. IN LATE 1999, THE GOA REQUESTED EXTRADITION WITH INTERPOL FOR MOHAMMAD ABBAS MALIK, FOR QUESTIONING ON THE 1992 ISRAELI EMBASSY BOMBING. SHORTLY THEREAFTER, THE GOA CANCELLED THE FORMAL EXTRADITION REQUEST. HOWEVER, AS A RESULT OF EXPRESSED GOA INTEREST IN MALIK AS A SUSPECTED TERRORIST, HIS CASE WAS INVESTIGATED BY THE FBI. HE WAS ARRESTED IN LOS ANGELES IN AUGUST 2000 ON CHARGES RELATED TO BEING AN ILLEGAL IMMIGRANT. FEDERAL COURT OFFICIALS IN LOS ANGELES, AS WELL AS ARGENTINE INVESTIGATIVE OFFICIALS, INTERVIEWED HIM IN SEPTEMBER 2000, AND HE DENIED ANY CONNECTION WITH THE ISRAELI EMBASSY BOMBING. FOLLOWING THE INTERVIEW, THE GOA INDICATED THAT THEY HAD NO FURTHER INTEREST IN MALIK WITH REGARD TO THE 1992 BOMBING.

4. QUESTION C: DISCUSSION HAS GONE ON FOR MANY YEARS IN ARGENTINA ABOUT POSSIBLE CHANGES IN THE LEGAL SYSTEM TO FACILITATE USE OF PAID INFORMANTS, PLEA BARGAINING, AND UNDERCOVER AGENTS. MOST LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS AND MANY PROMINENT JUDGES FAVOR SUCH CHANGES. HOWEVER, PAST ABUSES OF POLICE POWER DURING THE MILITARY REGIMES CONTINUE TO COLOR THE OPINIONS OF MUCH OF THE POPULATION ON SUCH ISSUES. THE ABSENCE OF THESE JUDICIAL POWERS SERVES AS AN IMPEDIMENT TO PROSECUTION OF SUSPECTED TERRORISTS.

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5. HOWEVER, IN MARCH 2000, THE GOA PASSED CHANGES TO THE CRIMINAL PROCEDURES CODE, FACILITATING THE INVESTIGATION AND PROSECUTION IN TERRORISM CASES. IT INCLUDES THE ADDITIONS OF LIMITED PLEA-BARGAINING FOR COUNTER-TERRORISM SUBJECTS. HOWEVER, IMPLEMENTING REGULATIONS HAVE NOT YET BEEN APPROVED OR ISSUED.

6. QUESTION D: THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT STRONGLY DEPLORES TERRORIST ATTACKS WHENEVER THEY OCCUR AND FREQUENTLY MAKES PUBLIC STATEMENTS OF ITS POSITION. THE GOA REGULARLY PARTICIPATES IN THE ANNIVERSARIES OF THE BOMBINGS, AND FREQUENTLY MAKES POSITIVE, PUBLIC STATEMENTS AGAINST TERRORISM. PRESIDENT DE LA RUA AND A NUMBER OF HIS CABINET MINISTERS PARTICIPATED IN THE JEWISH COMMUNITY'S MARKING OF THE SIXTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMIA BOMBING ON JULY 17, 2000.

7. QUESTION E. IN EARLY 2000, THE GOA ANNOUNCED THE CREATION OF A SPECIAL INTER-AGENCY, INVESTIGATIVE TASK FORCE TO SERVE AS A MEANS OF STRENGTHENING THE INVESTIGATION OF THE BOMBING OF THE ISRAELI EMBASSY IN 1992 AND THE AMIA BOMBING IN 1994. THE ACTIVITY OF THIS TASK FORCE HAS RECEIVED MIXED REVIEWS IN ITS FIRST MONTHS OF ACTIVITY. THE MOST POSITIVE IMPACT HAS BEEN THE IMPROVED COMMUNICATION AMONG THE INVOLVED AGENCIES, INCLUDING THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR, FEDERAL POLICE, AND THE INTELLIGENCE SECRETARIAT.

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UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 02 BUENOS AIRES 004842

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8. IN DECEMBER 2000, THE GOA ANNOUNCED AN INITIATIVE TO CREATE AN INTELLIGENCE UNIT WITHIN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE SPECIFICALLY GEARED TOWARDS ANALYZING TERRORIST THREATS. REPORTEDLY, IT WILL FUNCTION IN THE DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE UNIT WORKING WITH MILITARY AND CIVIL ANALYSTS THAT WILL SPECIFICALLY MONITOR CONDITIONS FOR NEW THREATS IN THE AREA OF INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM.

9. THE GOA CONTINUES ITS EFFORTS WITH ITS REGIONAL PARTNERS IN STRENGTHENING THE SECURITY IN THE TRI-BORDER AREA OF ARGENTINA, BRAZIL, AND PARAGUAY.

10. QUESTION F. THE GOA DOES NOT IN ANY WAY PROVIDE SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM, TERRORISTS, OR TERRORIST GROUPS.

11. QUESTION G. THE GOA HAS NOT MADE ANY PUBLIC STATEMENTS IN SUPPORT OF A TERRORIST-SUPPORTING COUNTRY ON A TERRORISM ISSUE.

12. QUESTION H. THERE HAS BEEN NO CHANGE IN THE GOA'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS TERRORISM IN THE YEAR 2000. THE FUNDAMENTAL GOVERNMENT POLICY IS ONE OF STRONG SUPPORT FOR ANTI-TERRORISM MEASURES, AND THE GOA IS FULLY COOPERATIVE IN INTERNATIONAL ANTI-TERRORISM EFFORTS.

13. QUESTION I. THE USG CONTINUES TO WORK CLOSELY WITH ARGENTINA ON ITS ANTI-TERRORISM EFFORTS. THROUGH FBI AND INS EFFORTS, THE USG WORKED CLOSELY WITH THE GOA TO ARRANGE THE INTERVIEW OF MOHAMMAD ABBAS MALIK,

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FOR INFORMATION ON THE 1992 ISRAELI EMBASSY BOMBING
(SEE PARA 3 ABOVE). IN 2000, THE USG ON A NUMBER OF
OCCASIONS PROVIDED INFORMATION TO THE GOA IN RESPONSE
TO REQUESTS RELATED TO TERRORIST ACTIVITY. THE USG
CONTINUES TO WORK CLOSELY WITH THE GOA IN THE TRI-
BORDER AREA.

14. THE GOA HAS RATIFIED TEN OF THE TWELVE
INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS ON ANTI-TERRORISM. HOWEVER,
THEY HAVE NOT YET RATIFIED THE TWO MOST RECENT
CONVENTIONS, WHICH INCLUDE THE INTERNATIONAL
CONVENTION FOR THE REPRESSION OF ATTEMPTED TERRORIST
ATTACKS COMMITTED WITH BOMBS AND THE INTERNATIONAL
CONVENTION FOR THE REPRESSION OF THE FINANCING OF
TERRORISM. THE US, ALONG WITH THE G-8 GROUP OF
COUNTRIES, RECENTLY DEMARCHED THE GOA ON THIS ISSUE.
THE GOA HAS REPORTED THAT THE FORMER HAS BEEN SIGNED,
BUT STILL HAS NOT BEEN SENT TO CONGRESS FOR
RATIFICATION, AND THE LATTER HAS NOT YET BEEN SIGNED.

15. QUESTION J. AND K: N/A
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